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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

BRYANT, DAVID P

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3726

DATE MAILED: 12/13/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/035,452

Applicant(s)

ITO ET AL.

Examiner

David P. Bryant

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 13-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 13-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/600,841.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____.
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 13-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The claims are generally narrative and indefinite, failing to conform with current U.S. practice. They appear to be a literal translation into English from a foreign document and are replete with grammatical and idiomatic errors.

Examples of specific indefinite errors are noted below with respect to claim 13, but the remainder of the claims include numerous additional errors, and should be reviewed carefully and amended where appropriate:

Claim 13:

Throughout the claim, reference to the components as a “male thread” and a “female thread” is confusing, since “threads” are generally not construed to be structural members, but instead are simply provided on a structural member to permit threaded engagement with another structural member.

In lines 1, 6, and 7, “sheet-like” is indefinite, as it is unclear how the member is “like” a sheet.

In line 2, “rod like” is indefinite, as it is unclear how the member is “like” a rod.

In line 3, "the male lead thread" lacks proper antecedent.

In lines 3-4, "its one end portion" lacks proper antecedent.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 13-17 and 19-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Reinke (U.S. Patent No. 3,641,805).

Reinke teaches a sheet member fixing device 10 as claimed, as set forth below:

Claims 13 and 14: In Figure 1, note rod 14 having male threads 20 formed thereon and having a hook 14' formed on the end thereof, the rod being screwed into a nut 21 having female threads therein. In use, as disclosed in column 2 (lines 13-17), the hooked end of the rod is passed through a hole 24 in a sheet member 17, and the sheet member is supported by sandwiching it between the hook and the nut.

Claims 15-17: As depicted in the Figures, the hook 14' is disposed square (i.e. perpendicular) to the rod 14, and points in one direction.

Claims 19 and 20: In Figures 1 and 2, note ring-shaped handle 23.

Claim 21: As is well known, nut 21 can be screwed down on rod 14 by hand.

Claims 13-16 and 18-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Hultquist (U.S. Patent No. 4,502,317).

Hultquist teaches a sheet member fixing device as claimed, as set forth below:

Claims 13 and 14: In Figure 13, note rod 11 having male threads 40a formed thereon and having a hook 131 formed on the end thereof, the rod being screwed into a nut 70 having female threads therein. In use, as disclosed in column 5 (lines 30-57), the hooked end of the rod is passed through a hole in a sheet member 30, and the sheet member is supported by sandwiching it between the hook and the nut.

Claims 15 and 16: As depicted in the Figures, the hook 131 is disposed square (i.e. perpendicular) to the rod 11.

Claim 18: In Figure 13, note beveled edge 6.

Claims 19 and 20: In Figures 11 and 12, note ring-shaped handle 50.

Claim 21: As is well known, nut 70 can be screwed down on rod 11 by hand.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Each reference discloses a vehicle sheet metal repair tool, many of which include hooked pulling ends.

Telephone inquiries regarding the status of applications or other general questions, by persons entitled to the information, should be directed to the group clerical personnel. In as much as the official records and applications are located in the clerical section of the examining groups, the clerical personnel can readily provide status information. M.P.E.P. 203.08. The Group clerical receptionist number is (703) 308-1148.

If in receiving this Office Action it is apparent to applicant that certain documents are missing, e.g., copies of references cited, form PTO-1449, form PTO-892, etc., requests for copies of such papers or other general questions should be directed to Tech Center 3700 Customer Service at (703) 306-5648, or fax (703) 872-9301 or by email to CustomerService3700@uspto.gov.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **David Bryant** whose telephone number is **(703) 308-1859**. Draft amendments or proposed changes to the application may be faxed directly to the examiner at any time via RightFAX at (703) 746-4213. The examiner can normally be reached on **Mondays-Thursdays from 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM**.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Greg Vidovich can be reached on 703-308-1513. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9302 for regular communications and 703-872-9303 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1148.

Other helpful telephone numbers are listed for applicant's benefit.

Allowed Files & Publication	(703) 308-6789 or (888) 786-0101
Assignment Branch	(703) 308-9723
Certificates of Correction	(703) 305-8309
Drawing Corrections/Draftsman	(703) 305-8404/8335
Petitions/Special Programs	(703) 305-9285
Terminal Disclaimers	(703) 305-8408
PCT Help Desk	(703) 305-3257

If the information desired is not provided above, or a number has been changed, please call the general information help line below.

Information Help line	1-800-786-9199
Internet PTO-Home Page	http://www.uspto.gov/



David P. Bryant
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3726